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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 KHARTOUM 000282

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DEPT FOR D, AF - A/S FRAZER, AND IO - A/S SILVERBERG, FROM
CHARGE D'AFFAIRES HUME

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [KPKO](#) [MOPS](#) [EAID](#) [US](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [SU](#)

SUBJECT: ACTION NEEDED TO STEM WORSENING SECURITY IN DARFUR

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Classified By: CDA Cameron Hume, Reason: Section 1.4 (b) and (d)

1. (C) A February 4-5 visit to Darfur confirmed that the security situation in Darfur is getting worse. A companion message will report on separate meetings with the local governor, the new AMIS commander, UN staff, U.S. military observers, and international NGOs. All are worried what will happen next. The deteriorating situation is characterized by:

-- More frequent violence throughout the area: along the border with Ch`d, io the"
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-- Disappearing command and control: The political leadership of the SLA and JEM have faltering control of their units and no control over splinter groups active in banditry and hostage-taking. The government has enlisted undisciplined Arab militiamen into popular defense forces and allowed renegade operations by some commanders. Worse, some reports indicate the government may be actively instigating Reizegat tribesmen to take up arms against neighboring Fur; and

-- Overall, lawlessness is spreading.

2. (C) The current peace process is based on a cease-fire agreement between the parties, supported by AMIS. The parties ignore their commitments to the cease-fire; and, the cease-fire commission lacks any vigor in investigating incidents. While AMIS has registered success in decreasing the scale of violence in Darfur, over a third of the entire population has abandoned their homes in the countryside for the relative security of the IDP camps. AMIS cannot deliver improved security by simply working with the parties to maintain the often violated cease-fire. AMIS should redirect its efforts away from &observing8 a cease-fire to which neither party demonstrates much commitment toward a phased strategy to provide security and to re-establish order.

3. (C) The Darfur crisis, once essentially an internal conflict of a failing state, is now also an international conflict between Chad and Sudan. In violation of the bedrock obligation not to use force or the threat of force against other states, both governments arm and harbor insurgent groups that attack across the international border. The AU talks in Abuja ignore these threats to international peace and security, despite the presence of an official Chadian &mediator.8 On the ground NGOs and military observers report rising tensions in the border area, increased levels of armament, and greater restrictions on travel. The UN security threat level is now just one step short of mandatory evacuation of all humanitarian personnel; at current levels of staffing operations will be curtailed within three weeks. The risks are serious and require immediate attention.

4. (C) On February 4, AU mediator Salim Salim painted a troubled picture of the negotiations. Around the table in Abuja the parties were making progress in discussing wealth- and power-sharing, but on the ground in Darfur they were responsible for a deplorable escalation of violence. Each month since October the fighting has worsened and forced severe restrictions on humanitarian operations. Salim stated that the international community was drawing the conclusion that Darfur was lawless and that the parties were not serious about making peace. The facts on the ground confirm Salim,s conclusion.

15. (C) The new AMIS commander, General Ihekare, told CDA Hume that he was determined to &dominate the area8 to improve security, rather than simply to rely on the good will of the parties or the faulty cease-fire mechanism. He said he needed to reshape the operation in the border area, where the risks were higher, and he saw a need to redeploy CIVPOL in order to make most efficient use of his troops. He wanted to begin live-fire training for his troops, to step up training in use of the Canadian APCs, and to deploy an increased number of U.S. military observers. Ihekare is planning to improve AMIS operations. He is not waiting for possible decisions about UN-rehatting.

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16. (C) Recommendations: Despite positive inputs, the current framework for solving the Darfur crisis is not working. We need to redirect efforts in three areas:

-- First, security plans ought no longer to be based solely on the parties, insincere commitment to their agreed cease-fire. AMIS or a follow-on UN force must plan to extend security and to protect civilians; perhaps the success of the UN operation in Sierra Leone could provide a model. The USG should respond positively and immediately to the AMIS commander,s request for additional U.S. military observers and open a dialogue with him regarding other support he could use now. On the diplomatic front we should still support the Abuja process, but no longer be held hostage to it. The facts on the ground confirm the need for more independent action;

-- Second, the U.S. should lead the call for action to stem the risks of conflict along the Chad-Sudan border, a concern not adequately covered by current AMIS operations. Regional peace efforts, such as the consultations now convened in Libya, may be helpful, but will not be sufficient. An early response could include a UN mandate, perhaps initially for AMIS operating under Chapter VIII with outside support, to monitor the border and to report to the UN Security Council as well as to the AU; and

-- Third, the USG cannot afford a hands-off posture with regard to the planning for the eventual UN mandate or the AMIS transition to that mandate. We should not allow the wishes of the parties negotiating in Abuja to dictate the terms of a mandate, nor should we simply await the proposals and plans of UNDPKO. Initially we need to work with the new AMIS commander on the ground to improve performance, creating a more satisfactory base-line. Simultaneously, to produce the right &range of options8 called for in the UNSC presidential statement, we should engage AMIS and the UN in the field to offer solid military advice and planning assistance. The dangers in Darfur are rising and call for prompt and effective measures.

17. (U) Tripoli minimize considered.
HUME